

**Unlock's Mission Statement; -**  
**Unlocking** real life stories of urban people  
**Revealing** Good News of the Down to Earth Christ  
**Releasing** life changing skills and confidence

*(These are seen as a cyclical process - see below)*

**Unlock principles: -**

No one should be excluded from growing in their Christian faith simply because the way that they take in information, think, or learn, is different to the ways in which the Christian establishment has always done these things.

No one should feel excluded by the church because they are 'not the right kind of people'. No one should feel that they are beyond the reach of God's Grace because they are 'not posh enough'.

No one should feel excluded from church life because they do not have the right qualifications, or the right kind of job, or live in the right kind of house, or street, or read the right books, or have the right way of speaking.

The fact that no one ever *meant* to make people feel that way does not mean that it has not happened. The church needs to be prepared to listen attentively to those who have felt marginalized or excluded.

Those who the church has somehow kept at the edge, are often those from whom we have most to learn.

Christians can, and do, learn about their faith simply by

1. sharing stories from their own everyday experience and
2. - relating them to the stories in the bible and
3. - deciding what to do about it
4. then taking action and

5. sharing stories of the actions they have taken and so on . . . .

This simple approach is easy to facilitate and is accessible to people who are alienated by traditional, text based methods of studying Christian faith. (It can also prove to be a refreshing approach for those who are quite comfortable with traditional methods!)

In traditional learning 'students' encounter a 'text'. The text may then be learned, compared to other 'texts', critiqued, or applied. The student may acquire knowledge, skills or alter their point of view. The text is 'stored' by the student for future reference. The student moves on to consider another 'text'.

Unlock's approach takes the students *own experience* and/or context as the 'text'. Everyone can speak with authority about their own experience or context. These texts are *already* 'stored' in the student's, or the community's memory. They do not have to be learned, they are already familiar. But they can be explored, compared to other 'texts' (possibly in the bible), critiqued, and learning drawn from them, which can be applied.

**What churches can do:-**

1. Take concrete and regular action which clearly communicates that the day to day lives, work, and experiences of *Everyday Christians* is highly valued.
2. Find someone on the church fringe, or beyond, who isn't into text, and ask them to give you some *honest* feedback on how comfortable they feel in your churches' worship and learning, or working, groups then act to improve the situation. (Like asking someone in a wheelchair to do a disabled access survey of your building.)
3. Corporately and individually - put *at least as much* time, commitment and energy into doing community things in the community as you do into doing churchy things in church.

**10 Things it is *not* helpful to assume: -**

1. That just because people are able to read that they like to, or that it's the best way for them to learn.
2. That the 'text shy' are not smart.

3. That what works for you works for everyone else.
4. That other people think in the same way that you do.
5. That people who are not engaged by courses are not interested in learning about their faith.
6. That those with no qualifications have nothing to teach.
7. That everyone who wants to learn will find a way.
8. That 'it didn't do *us* any harm, did it.'
9. That if church doesn't do it, it isn't holy.
10. That if it isn't in a book it doesn't have any authority